The New Berrigan Letters; Bad News from Cuba, pgs. 2 & 3

More policemen assaulted kids than kids assaulted policemen, but they can get away with it. They don't get charged.
—Judge Charles W. Halleck, D.C. Superior Court, who accepted no contest pleas from those arrested in the May Day demonstrations, sentenced them to time already served and released them.

I. F. Stone's Bi-Weekly

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The Kooks Nobody Noticed

One way to assess the recent peace actions in Washington is to begin with the counter-demonstrations. Nixon may have been as unaffected as he claims by the anti-war rallies, but the counter demonstrations must worry him. Their size and character indicate how overblown are his warnings of a backlash if we withdraw from Vietnam without some kind of a victory. The contrast between the pro and anti-war mobilizations is so sharp that it can reflect only a vast indifference to the outcome, an overwhelming desire simply to get out.* The silent majority Nixon claimed when he started out to win by Vietnamization has dwindled to a wooly fringe. The first pro-war march, on May 1, designed as an answer to the quarter million or more who gathered here on April 24, drew some 125 demonstrators, including one black, a 17-year old in a dashiki. The second, a week later, after the May Day events, proved to be the biggest bust yet staged here by the fundamentalist radio preacher, the Rev. Carl McIntire. He predicted that his turnout would surpass the 250,000 of April 24. He ended by claiming that he had drawn 25,000. A *Washington Post* counter along the line of march logged 4,800 participants. Even the hard hats, of whose support McIntire boasted, disavowed him. Peter J. Brennan, president of the building trades council in New York, said he was "not aware" that any building trades leader planned to attend, and added that the ironworker who did appear spoke only for himself.

Kookiest Man In Congress

The two members of Congress who showed up must make Nixon queasy. Republican John G. Schmitz of Orange County, California, said he was there "to show the public that the members who joined the demonstrations last week are not representative of Congress." Schmitz is much less so. He lists himself in his official biography as a member of the John Birch Society. The other Congressman to address the pro-war rally, John J. Rarick of Louisiana, is even further right. He told the crowd, while cheers rose and Confederate flags waved, that the Nixon Administration lacked "the guts to end this war in five to six weeks, as every veteran military leader says could be done." Rarick is the kookiest member of Congress and the most blatantly racist. As a judge, he once greeted a black lawyer by saying "I didn't know they let you coons practice law" (*Time*, Aug. 16, 1968). He has filled the Congressional Record with an endless cascade of writings by the freaks of the far right with speeches of his own to match. During the Johnson years a typical selection (11/7/67) was "Walt Rostow: Another Alger Hiss?"

From Rarick's speeches and insertions so far this year one may learn that the famous TV program for children, Sesame Street, "is actually subversive and contrary to our Christian heritage" (3/25/71); that "the die for totalitarianism" was cast when the Supreme Court upheld the vote for 18-year olds (3/4/71); that Attorney General Mitchell, though posing as "Mr. Law and Order," is insidiously refusing to put the Black Panthers on his subversive list (2/4/71); and that Nixon committed treason when he opened the door to better relations with China (3/2/71). The flavor of the demonstration was indicated by a gentleman in the crowd who claimed to be a lawyer. He told a reporter Nixon was only pretending to oppose Communism—"he's trying to keep the American public fooled until he can get them totally enclosed in socialism." This is the loony-bin constituency which provides the last hope of certain support for the victory policy Nixon dare not too openly avow.

Unfortunately any lunatic can escape detection today by getting his hair cut. The pro-war demonstrators dwell, like Rarick and Schmitz, in a paranoid world where it seems all too logical to suspect that Nixon, like Eisenhower before him, may be a conscious tool of the Communist conspiracy. Birchite theory may be a joke now but this is just the conspiratorial miasma in which all the horrors of Fascism and Nazism were bred a generation ago, and can germinate again. Nixon and Mitchell intersect with it because at bottom they, too, believe that all their troubles with today's youth and the peaceniks spring from conspiracies hatched by a diabolically clever few, that if only they can throw Rennie Davis in jail most of their troubles will be over, and that to preach an end of the war and of social injustice as the path to domestic peace is—as Nixon put it in his Phoenix speech last October—"appeasement." The "tough-minded approach to violence" he advocated at Phoenix was the guide-line the police and the military

(Continued on Page Four)

No End In Sight

Vietnam's future after U.S. departure looks bleak to many analysts. Even the optimists expect Saigon will face years of hard fighting against a still-strong Communist insurgency. Red striking power will surely build again unless the South Vietnamese can hit repeatedly at bases, supply lines in Laos and Cambodia. Even now, the enemy shows it can hammer installations in South Vietnam's central and northern provinces. Rebuilding the economy in Vietnam, with the war dragging on, threatens to be far harder than in Korea. "Americans tend to think of war as having a distinct end followed by peacetime rebuilding," says an analyst, "but that won't happen this time." The strain of maintaining a big army will hinder recovery efforts. Some Americans favor at least token cuts in Saigon's army. South Vietnam's big cities, overcrowded with restless war refugees, could erupt in rioting.
—Wall Street Journal, April 30.

*** Even Senator Dole of Kansas, chairman of the Republican National Committee, told James Doyle in an interview (Washington Star, May 9), "Whenever I'm talking to farm groups or business groups or whoever, they tell me they think the President is doing a great job, but they always wind up asking, 'When's the war going to end.'"**

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A Maneuver Which May Indicate The Kissinger Kidnap Plot Was Abandoned

THE LETTERS APPENDED to the new indictment in the Berrigan case lower our opinion of the government *and* the defendants. People who (1) would talk so loosely of kidnapping Kissinger and some unnamed "liberals" to "try" him and (2) put it on paper are silly and dangerous. The next step after kidnapping is murder, as we saw in Quebec. The idea of conscience as a higher law can be overdone; the fact that a man, however sincere, feels something deeply neither makes it true or, if true, warrants taking the law in his own hands. Lynchers and Torquemadas were produced by the same process; it is time to put the brakes on fanaticism in our own ranks.

The Clue To The Puzzle

But the government is itself guilty of disrespect for law in releasing these letters with the new indictment, and we cannot believe that the courts will not treat this latest maneuver harshly. It is another effort, like J. Edgar Hoover's sensational testimony last year, to try the case in public. We agree with Gary Wills, author of *Nixon Agonistes,* who told a Johns Hopkins audience after the new indictment came down (*Baltimore Sun,* May 3) that Hoover would not have revealed the alleged kidnap plot "if the plot had not been given up. He would much rather have caught the plotters in the act." The letters show that Rev. Philip Berrigan had serious doubts about the plan's feasibility.

If one assumes the plot was abandoned, all the pieces of the government's puzzling conduct begin to fit. It would explain why Hoover disclosed the plot instead of waiting to catch the plotters red-handed. It would also explain why the government released the letters with a new indictment instead of waiting to use them as key pieces of evidence in the trial. On trial, the letters would have had to be authenticated; the judge would rule on admissibility. They might look very differently in the full context of other evidence, and they could not be used as evidence against the other alleged conspirators if their cases were severed. A defense motion to sever was pending. So was a defense motion to get a look at this and other evidence under a protective order preventing pre-trial public disclosure.

Instead of waiting for a court ruling on these motions, the government jumped the gun by releasing these letters. This endangers their admissibility but serves the purpose of damaging all the defendants, though the letters would have been admissible if authenticated and in the event of severance only against those who wrote them. One can only conclude that this maneuver, like the attempt to peddle the documents to *Time* Magazine, indicates that the letters really wouldn't add up to much if subjected to fair trial procedures. *Time,* to its credit, declined to take part in the smear. While *Time* will not disclose the source, it seems obviously to have been the FBI itself which offered the letters.

To top it all, the new indictment adds to the alleged conspiracy acts of draft record burning for which there are already admissions and even convictions. Since these are now lumped with the kidnap plot in one conspiracy count, the government may easily win a conviction even if the jury believes there was no plot to kidnap Kissinger and sabotage the capital's heating ducts. The form of the indictment forecloses separate verdicts and it might look as if the government had proved the kidnap plot when all it had done was "prove" what everybody admits—that there was a plot to burn draft records. Pretty tricky!

Freedoms We're Defending Dept.

The repression of newspapers continues and indeed has been increased. The Catholic biweekly Doi Dien—Face to Face—has been closed for 6 months and its editor, Father Chan Tin, has been sentenced to 9 months in jail. Father Truong Ba Can has also been sentenced to 9 months for an article which he published in the Catholic biweekly Doi Dien. As of March 1, 1971, Vietnam's largest circulation newspaper Tin Sang—Morning News—had experienced the suppression of 11 of its past 12 issues. Tin Sang is edited by a Vietnamese Congressman, Ngo Cong Duc.

It is also distressing to note the way in which the US Government aids and abets the systematic repression of political dissent in South Vietnam. The 1970 report to the Ambassador from the Director of the USAID program in Vietnam notes that in 1971 the United States will pay $30,000,000 for prisons and public safety whereas in 1970 the US paid only $20,900,000 for this category. At the same time the total expenditure for public health financed by the US decreased from a total of $27.8 million in 1970 to $25 million in 1971.

—Rep. Drinan (D. Mass.) in the House April 20.

HISC/HUAC Gets A New Lease On Life Despite A Record High Vote For Its Abolition

In March the California State Senate voted to abolish its Un-American Activities Committee after the president pro tempore of the Senate, James Mills of San Diego, discovered that the committee kept a file on him among other "subversives." Congressman Edwards of California suggested that the House of Representatives follow that example and abolish its own Internal Security Committee, as House Un-American is now named. Though 18 of California's 38 Congressmen voted to abolish HISC/HUAC when its annual appropriation came up on April 29, it got $820,000 by a vote of 298 to 75. Just a few minutes earlier, 104 members voted for an Edwards motion to recommit the appropriation request for public hearings on its necessity. These were the largest votes against this witch hunt body since it was established as a standing committee of the House by a bare majority of 146 to 134 in 1945.

The votes came after Father Drinan, a Jesuit recently elected from Massachusetts and the only civil libertarian heretic on the committee, revealed for the first time that it too has a file on members of the House, though the Committee claims that dossiers on present Congressmen are not kept in its active files but held highly secret. Yet Edwards pointed out that guilt-by-association material from the Committee files about Senator McGovern and Congressman Dellums turned up in a McCarthy-era style speech on the peace movement by Republican Congressman John G. Schmitz of Orange County California which filled 45 pages of the Congressional Record April 21. Schmitz lists himself in the Congressional Directory as a John Birch Society member, but we'll bet a dollar to a doughnut HISC/HUAC doesn't have a file on Schmitz.

Father Drinan touched a tender nerve when he told the House a vote for this discredited committee could be justified only by a fear that a member's vote would be "caricatured by future political enemies as a vote which indicates that he is 'soft on communism.'" How long, he asked, "must members of the Congress be subservient to this craven fear?" The same members, like Boggs, who object to FBI surveillance, submit to that of HISC/HUAC. Others, who criticize Army spying on civilians, meekly vote for a committee whose anonymous and secret files are a source of slander against dissenters of all kinds.

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Nixon's Own Unnoticed "Pulitzer Prizes" In The Kent State Killings

TWO KINDS OF PRIZES were given out last week on the anniversary of the Kent State killings, one publicly, one covertly. Pulitzer prizes went to the *Akron Beacon-Journal,* a Knight Newspaper, for its thorough and courageous special issue on the shooting and to John Paul Filo, 21-year old free lance photographer, for that heart-rending picture of Mary Vecchio crying out over the body of Jeffrey Miller, a feat for which Filo has been punished by joblessness. The awards on the other side of the fence were the almost unnoticed nomination by Nixon of Hobart Lewis, executive editor of *Readers Digest,* and of James Michener, as members of the Advisory Committee to the U.S. Information Agency. Michener's account of the Kent State killings in the March and April issues of the *Digest* did for Nixon what the Scranton Commission refused to do—excuse the killings as due to a plot by a few agitators. The *Digest* has been a virtual Nixon house-organ for years; it put a research team on the Kent killings last year and then got Michener to do the writing. The result was expected. Since the appointments require Senate confirmation, we hope some Senator will block unanimous consent and make a speech on the Kent State murders and the quality of *Digest* coverage and ask whether this is the kind of information we want spread world-wide. And a scowl for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee which approved these nominations without a murmur.

The Indifference Of The Media

While CBS marked the anniversary with a moving program about the families of the four killed at Kent, the press and the media generally showed a basic indifference in their treatment of a press conference held here May 3 by an interfaith group which is pressing the Justice Department to quit stalling and to name a special Federal grand jury. So far as the clergymen have been able to learn, the *Akron Beacon-Journal* was the only paper to cover the statement they issued on the unanswered questions and the need for a Federal grand jury. The National Council of Churches, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Board of Christian Social Concerns of the United Methodist Church and the Synagogue Council of America joined in the appeal and hoped to see the Attorney General soon. A Federal grand jury in Mississippi failed to indict in the Jackson State killings but did at least expose the perjury and the conspiracy to obstruct justice of the Jackson police. This may help the families of the victims in their private suits. It's a strange kind of law and order which treats the killing of students, white and black, as a peccadillo.

What Michener Kept Off The Today Show

What makes us uneasy is that . . . effective literary atmosphere is sometimes created at some distance from reality as we on campus know it . . . Full page city newspaper ads claim the *Digest's* version tells "what really happened" . . . that the truth about a sinister "Haunted House" is revealed. Considering that, at least as condensed, these "truths" are established by highly dubious and even inaccurate use of facts, the *Digest's* claims will mislead their millions of readers . . . The "Haunted House" is presented as a hippie commune visited by people whose names, it is claimed, answer the question, "Was Kent State attacked by outside agitators?" But this house is not a commune. It is a 4-apartment house rented by the local Catholic Church and regularly houses college faculty, fraternity men and other ordinary people. It is not called "The Haunted House" by townspeople, and its sinister atmosphere in the Digest is a literary creation.

—From a statement by Craig Morgan, Student Body President, Kent State University, endorsed by the Student Senate March 8, on the first installment of James Michener's book on Kent State as it appeared in the March issue of Reader's Digest. *This is what Michener prevented me from quoting on the NBC Today show on April 28 by shouting me down as the program ended. For the truth about the killings read the on-the-scene report by two Cleveland Plain Dealer reporters, Michael D. Roberts and Joseph Eszterhas in their unjustly neglected book,* "Thirteen Seconds."

THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT has taken steps to make a lonely pilgrim for peace a man without a country. It has invalidated the passport of the Buddhist monk and poet, Thich Nhat Hanh, now touring the U.S. for the Fellowship of Reconciliation and advised the American government (*Baltimore Sun* from Saigon, May 7) that he is illegally abroad. Saigon hopes he will be deported back to South Vietnam where prison awaits him. He is head of the Vietnamese Buddhist peace delegation in Paris and has been asking that the U.S. declare a unilateral cease-fire, end all bombing and set a date for total withdrawal. He is a saintly man who speaks for a suffering people. His deportation would add to our country's shame. Please protest to the State Department.

Bad News From Cuba: Stalinist-Style Confession Wrung From Revolutionary Poet

When Heberto Padilla was awarded a poetry prize in 1968 by the Cuban Union of Artists and Writers, *Verde Olivo,* organ of Castro's armed forces protested. Brass hats run true to type in every society, and Padilla's passionate concern for truth was too much for them. Their power has since increased and on March 20 Padilla was imprisoned on unspecified charges in Havana. On April 9 a group of leading Leftist writers in Western Europe and Latin America, including Jean-Paul Sartre, Carlos Fuentes, Octavia Paz and Carlos Franqui protested in an open letter to Castro (*Le Monde,* April 9 and *New York Review* May 6) that "the use of repressive measures against intellectuals and writers who have exercised their right of criticism within the revolution can only have deeply negative repercussions among the anti-imperialist forces of the entire world." On April 27, Padilla was released but only after signing a confession (text, *Le Monde,* April 29) as phony as the worst in the Stalin era and in Czechoslovakia's Slansky affair.

The Cuban novelist, Juan Arcocha, who once represented the Castro daily, *Revolucion,* in Moscow declared in the same issue of *Le Monde* that it could only have been obtained by torture. The confession accused the independent Leftist, K. S. Karol, author of *"The Guerrillas in Power,"* and the Left Socialist agricultural expert, Rene Dumont, author of *"Cuba: Est-Il Socialist?"* of being CIA agents. Both have visited Cuba several times on Castro's invitation. Both books criticize the growing militarization of Cuba and the negative effect on agriculture and on popular support.

Castro replied to the letter of protest in a speech (*Le Monde,* May 4) in which he said it was good news that "the liberal bourgeoisie are at war with us." Stalinist-style, he evaded the basic issue. How can the regime be saved from military and bureaucratic rigidity, how can Cuba's full human and natural resources be mobilized, if there is no freedom of criticism? In an earlier day, Castro and Che Guevara themselves made this point. Today Castro is surrounded by yes men. His own vanity and megalomania have become enemies of a besieged revolution.

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"Will You Be A Good German And Look The Other Way?"

(Continued From Page One)

applied to the May Day protesters even when they were largely and unmistakably non-violent.

Just As They Have Done In Vietnam

This, as much as the emergency, explains why of more than 10,000 seized, hardly 20 percent were arrested legally, and why they were held under disgraceful conditions in packed jails and makeshift detention centers during the May Day events. Traffic moved but law was suspended, and in the process many otherwise staid citizens were angered and radicalized. This is what Kennedy, the only Senator to defend the May Day tribe, meant when he said in a speech at Iona College, "The system has responded as poorly to the war protests as it has to the war." Here, as in Vietnam, Nixon carries on the policy of trying to solve a political problem by military or police means. The over-reaction sprang from basic approach as much as police necessity. Every reporter I know who had contact with the May Day tribe were impressed as I was by their kindliness to each other, the tact they showed in street arguments with older people, the devotion and—yes—love which led them to the risks they took, their striving toward a more ethical world which is the inner core of their non-conformity. But they, whom Thoreau and Gandhi would have saluted as their children, were treated as dangerous kooks while the real kooks were regarded indulgently as miguided patriots. And this was not just because these youth had reverted to the hair styles of Charles II and Louis XIV, creating a moronic shock effect. There was more than barber shop bias behind a frequent police barbarity. Nothing ever makes a society feel more menaced than its saints.

The May Day events were remarkably disciplined, especially considering the little Pearl Harbor surprise attack with which the police and the military drove most of the rock-and-roll fans out of town early Sunday morning. Wilder elements in the wings were kept under control, trashing to a minimum. Such incidents as the rough-housing in the offices of Senators Goldwater and Tower were very much the exception. Both incidents were deplored by the leadership; both Senators had been most courteous—as is their wont—in talking with non-violent peace delegations. Tower, in protesting the disorder of one group, admitted "both the dissenters and I have gained" from his other discussions. How would we feel if pro-war goons roughed up the offices of pro-peace Senators?

Were the May Day events worthwhile? Much of the disapproval from other sectors of the peace movement were standard expressions designed to protect their own respectability. The peace movement is divided between those who wish to persuade and those who wish to "bring the war home." The May Day tribe represented the non-violent section of the latter. Both approaches may be necessary. Why shouldn't we undergo some little disruption of traffic to make the sluggish conscience of the country aware of the misery and murder we continue to rain down on Indochina? The relatively mild reaction of the citizenry to the disruption, and the widespread criticism of the police, reflect not only a weariness with the war but a general recognition that the government is not responding as it should to normal political processes and bringing war to an end. Just as a handful of guerillas can be effective only where hope of change by normal political means has disappeared, so it is here with the tactics of disruption. In the wake of May Day, there are two main worries for the government if it persists. One is the painful potency of that cry raised by the May Day tribe, "Will you be a good German and look the other way?" The other is how much turmoil a relative handful created. If there had been 100,000 youngsters here, or 50,000, instead of 10,000, the task of maintaining order would have been formidable. That should keep Nixon and Mitchell awake at night.

Just A Little Sport

For the most part, the crowd was peaceful. But at one point, after six FBI agents dashed out of the building to arrest a young man who was writing on the exterior walls, an attempt was made to charge the gate. Among those who helped drag the young man into the Justice Department courtyard and wrestle him to the pavement was William C. Sullivan, 57, the No. 3 man in the FBI and one frequently mentioned as successor to J. Edgar Hoover. Sullivan described the action to a reporter as "just a little sport."

—Washington Post, May 5.

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